

Watt	Weiner	Wu
Waxman	Woolsey	Wynn

NOT VOTING—16

Crowley	Fattah	McKinney
Cubin	Fossella	Nussle
Davis, Jo Ann	Istook	Pelosi
Deal (GA)	Lewis (GA)	Wexler
Emanuel	Manzullo	
Evans	McHenry	

□ 1228

Messrs. TAYLOR of Mississippi, DAVIS of Tennessee, CHANDLER and CLEAVER changed their vote from “yea” to “nay.”

Mr. McCAUL of Texas changed his vote from “nay” to “yea.”

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

(By unanimous consent, Mr. BOEHNER was allowed to speak out of order.)

## LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, I know a lot of Members are interested in what the schedule is. I think all of you know that today we will move to consider the conference report on the Carl Perkins vocational education program. We will then move to the health IT bill. We expect that that will take us to late afternoon/early evening.

The reason I stood up is that it is pretty clear that we are in fact going to have votes tomorrow. There are a number of Members, though, from New York who want to go to former Representative Tom Manton's funeral. We will work with those Members to carve out a window so that those Members who want to go to New York can come back.

But we will have votes tomorrow. I wish I could tell you what those votes would be, but I expect we are going to have votes tomorrow.

## ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, 5-minute voting will resume. There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

## RECORDED VOTE

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 224, noes 188, not voting 20, as follows:

[Roll No. 413]

## AYES—224

Aderholt	Boehner	Cantor
Akin	Bonilla	Capito
Alexander	Bonner	Carter
Bachus	Bono	Castle
Baker	Boozman	Chabot
Barrett (SC)	Boustany	Chocola
Bartlett (MD)	Bradley (NH)	Coble
Barton (TX)	Brady (TX)	Cole (OK)
Bass	Brown (SC)	Conaway
Beauprez	Brown-Waite,	Crenshaw
Biggert	Ginny	Cuellar
Bilbray	Burgess	Culberson
Bilirakis	Buyer	Davis (KY)
Bishop (UT)	Calvert	Davis, Tom
Blackburn	Camp (MI)	Dent
Blunt	Campbell (CA)	Diaz-Balart, L.
Boehler	Cannon	Diaz-Balart, M.

Doolittle	King (NY)	Ramstad
Drake	Kingston	Regula
Dreier	Kirk	Rehberg
Duncan	Kline	Reichert
Ehlers	Knollenberg	Renzi
Emerson	Kolbe	Reynolds
English (PA)	Kuhl (NY)	Rogers (AL)
Everett	LaHood	Rogers (KY)
Feeney	LaHarm	Rogers (MI)
Ferguson	LaTourette	Rohrabacher
Fitzpatrick (PA)	Leach	Ros-Lehtinen
Flake	Lewis (CA)	Royce
Foley	Lewis (KY)	Ryan (WI)
Forbes	Linder	Ryun (KS)
Fortenberry	LoBiondo	Saxton
Fox	Lucas	Schmidt
Franks (AZ)	Lungren, Daniel	Schwarz (MI)
Frelinghuysen	E.	Sensenbrenner
Gallegly	Marchant	Sessions
Garrett (NJ)	McCauley (TX)	Shadegg
Gerlach	McCotter	Shaw
Gibbons	McCrery	Shays
Gilchrest	McHenry	Sherwood
Gillmor	McHugh	Shimkus
Gingrey	McKeon	Shuster
Gohmert	McMorris	Simmons
Goode	Mica	Simpson
Goodlatte	Miller (FL)	Smith (NJ)
Granger	Miller (MI)	Smith (TX)
Graves	Miller, Gary	Sodrel
Green (WI)	Moran (KS)	Souder
Gutknecht	Murphy	Stearns
Hall	Musgrave	Sullivan
Harris	Myrick	Sweeney
Hart	Neugebauer	Tancredo
Hastings (WA)	Ney	Taylor (NC)
Hayes	Northup	Terry
Hayworth	Norwood	Thomas
Hefley	Nunes	Thornberry
Hensarling	Nussle	Tiahrt
Herger	Osborne	Tiberi
Hobson	Otter	Turner
Hoekstra	Oxley	Upton
Hostettler	Paul	Walden (OR)
Hulshof	Pearce	Walsh
Hunter	Pence	Wamp
Hyde	Peterson (PA)	Weldon (FL)
Inglis (SC)	Petri	Weldon (PA)
Issa	Pickering	Weller
Jenkins	Pitts	Westmoreland
Jindal	Platts	Whitfield
Johnson (CT)	Poe	Wicker
Johnson (IL)	Porter	Wilson (NM)
Johnson, Sam	Price (GA)	Wilson (SC)
Jones (NC)	Pryce (OH)	Wolf
Keller	Putnam	Young (AK)
Kelly	Radanovich	Young (FL)
Kennedy (MN)		
King (IA)		

## NOES—188

Abercrombie	Cramer	Inslee
Ackerman	Cummings	Israel
Allen	Davis (AL)	Jackson (IL)
Andrews	Davis (CA)	Jackson-Lee
Baca	Davis (FL)	(TX)
Baird	Davis (IL)	Jefferson
Baldwin	DeFazio	Johnson, E. B.
Barrow	DeGette	Jones (OH)
Bean	Delahunt	Kanjorski
Becerra	DeLauro	Kaptur
Berkley	Dicks	Kennedy (RI)
Berman	Dingell	Kildee
Berry	Doggett	Kilpatrick (MI)
Bishop (GA)	Doyle	Kind
Bishop (NY)	Edwards	Kucinich
Blumenauer	Engel	Langevin
Boren	Eshoo	Lantos
Boswell	Etheridge	Larsen (WA)
Boucher	Farr	Larson (CT)
Boyd	Filner	Lee
Brady (PA)	Ford	Levin
Brown (OH)	Frank (MA)	Lipinski
Brown, Corrine	Gonzalez	Lofgren, Zoe
Butterfield	Gordon	Lowey
Capps	Green, Al	Lynch
Capuano	Grijalva	Maloney
Cardin	Gutierrez	Markey
Carnahan	Harman	Marshall
Carson	Hastings (FL)	Matheson
Case	Herseth	Matsui
Chandler	Higgins	McCarthy
Clay	Hinchey	McCollum (MN)
Cleaver	Hinojosa	McDermott
Clyburn	Holden	McGovern
Conyers	Holt	McIntyre
Cooper	Honda	McNulty
Costa	Hooley	Meehan
Costello	Hoyer	Meek (FL)

Meeks (NY)	Rahall	Solis
Melancon	Rangel	Spratt
Michaud	Reyes	Stark
Millender-McDonald	Ross	Stupak
Miller (NC)	Rothman	Tanner
Miller, George	Roybal-Allard	Tauscher
Mollohan	Ruppersberger	Taylor (MS)
Moore (KS)	Rush	Thompson (CA)
Moore (WI)	Ryan (OH)	Thompson (MS)
Moran (VA)	Sabo	Tierney
Murtha	Salazar	Towns
Nadler	Sánchez, Linda	Udall (CO)
Neal (MA)	T.	Udall (NM)
Oberstar	Sanchez, Loretta	Van Hollen
Obey	Sanders	Velázquez
Olver	Schakowsky	Visclosky
Ortiz	Schiff	Wasserman
Owens	Schwartz (PA)	Schultz
Pallone	Scott (GA)	Waters
Pascarella	Scott (VA)	Watson
Pastor	Serrano	Watt
Payne	Sherman	Waxman
Peterson (MN)	Skelton	Weiner
Pomeroy	Slaughter	Woolsey
Price (NC)	Smith (WA)	Wu
	Snyder	Wynn

## NOT VOTING—20

Burton (IN)	Emanuel	Manzullo
Cardoza	Evans	McKinney
Crowley	Fattah	Napolitano
Cubin	Fossella	Pelosi
Davis (TN)	Green, Gene	Strickland
Davis, Jo Ann	Istook	Wexler
Deal (GA)	Lewis (GA)	

□ 1238

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

## CONFERENCE REPORT ON S. 250, CARL D. PERKINS CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2006

Mr. McKEON. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 946, I call up the conference report to accompany the Senate bill (S. 250) to amend the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act of 1998 to improve the Act.

The Clerk read the title of the Senate bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 946, the conference report is considered read.

(For conference report and statement, see proceedings of the House of July 25, 2006, at page H5773.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California (Mr. McKEON) and the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. McKEON).

## GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. McKEON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the conference report to accompany S. 250.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. McKEON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this conference report and ask my colleagues to join me in doing the same.

The Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act will strengthen and improve career and technical education to help ensure academic success for students, whether they are pursuing postsecondary education or other venues.

Let me begin by recognizing Education Reform Subcommittee Chairman CASTLE and thanking him for his hard work and commitment to improving educational opportunities for students participating in career and technical education.

In January of 2005, he and our committee's former chairman, Majority Leader BOEHNER, introduced a bipartisan bill that was overwhelmingly backed by the House. I commend him for his leadership in crafting that reform legislation and for reaching across the aisle in the process. It is because of his work then that we are presenting such a strong conference report to the House today.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to thank my committee's senior Democrat, Mr. GEORGE MILLER, for his work and to recognize and thank our additional House conferees, Mr. SOUDER, Mr. OSBORNE, Mrs. MUSGRAVE, Ms. WOOLSEY, and Mr. KIND. Their efforts over the past year have made this conference report a reality.

Career and technical education is fundamental to our efforts to improve academic achievement at all levels so our Nation remains competitive in the face of a rapidly changing global economy. Each year, millions of students enrich their secondary and postsecondary educational opportunities through participation in career and technical education.

Nearly all students, about 97 percent in fact, leave public high school having taken some career and technical education. Furthermore, nearly half of all high school students and one-third of college students are involved in career and technical programs as a major part of their studies.

In short, it is a priority for millions and this conference report honors our commitment to them. The conference report before us will help States better utilize Federal funds for secondary and postsecondary career education programs, increase accountability, and emphasize student achievement and strengthen opportunities for coordination between secondary and postsecondary career and technical education.

In 1998, reforms made to the Perkins Act were aimed at increasing the focus on both technical skills and rigorous academic knowledge and helped us move further away from the school-to-work model. Our goal in this Congress was to build on that success.

Our principles at the outset of this reauthorization effort were straightforward, and I am proud to say that more than a year later, they are unchanged. The pillars of this conference report are: we're maintaining a focus on rigorous student academic and technical achievement; we're protecting

the role of States and local communities and asking for results in exchange for the money we are already spending at the Federal level; and we are seeking more opportunities for coordination between secondary and postsecondary career and technical education.

There are growing concerns across the country about the performance level of our high schools. The fundamental question remains, Are we preparing our young people to succeed in a globally competitive world? The legislation before us today helps us address that question, and speaks to the new realities of a changing economy and workplace.

Mr. Speaker, this conference report is a solid piece of reform legislation that is worthy of our support. I encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting it.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) will control the time of the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER).

There was no objection.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise also in support of this conference report. It has been more than a year since we passed H.R. 366, the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act. I am certain people were actually starting to think that this day would never come. But here we are, and we are here in a bipartisan posture.

You see, Mr. Speaker, miracles can happen. Then-Chairman BOEHNER and now-Chairman MCKEON and Subcommittee Chairman CASTLE need to be thanked and honored for getting us this far. But most importantly to me, I want to thank the hard work of the committee ranking member, Congressman GEORGE MILLER.

Having voted for H.R. 366, which passed the House almost unanimously, I believe that today's conference report significantly improves the bill.

□ 1245

Particularly pleasing is that this bill not only has expanded math, science, and technical programs, it also has continued and strengthened the Perkins Act commitment to preparing women and men for occupations that are nontraditional to them, to ensuring access to career and technical education for special populations who face unique challenges, and to preparing those students for careers that will lead them to self-sufficiency.

In this competitive global economy, Mr. Speaker, we can't afford to waste the potential of any of our people, so these provisions will help to ensure that this does not happen.

When this bill was in committee, I offered an amendment to ensure that States had sufficient administrative funding to carry out their increased re-

sponsibility under the bill. My amendment was not included in the House bill, but it is in the conference report.

Finally, the conference report improves accountability for and integration of strong academic measures and programs for career and technical education. It is important, however, to note that although Congress has rejected the President's proposals to eliminate career and technical education, we must do more. We need to provide our schools with the resources they need to carry out these programs. That means we need to increase funding for the Perkins Act while keeping our promises to fully funding the No Child Left Behind Act, because when it comes to no child left behind, this President and this Congress has fallen \$55 billion short.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE) will control the time of the gentleman from California (Mr. MCKEON).

There was no objection.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 4 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, it obviously gives me great pleasure to be here today and to rise in support of the conference report to the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006. I want to thank the gentleman from California (Mr. MCKEON) for his leadership in getting us to this end point, and the majority leader who is no longer head of the committee (Mr. BOEHNER) for his work, the gentleman and gentlewoman from California both present here right now, Mr. MILLER and Ms. WOOLSEY, for their bipartisan spirit, and our colleagues in the other body. I am blessed to be on a couple of committees where there is bipartisan spirit at least some of the time, and we are able to get a few things done and this is one of them.

The Perkins Act aims to prepare youth and adults for the future by building their academic and technical skills in preparation for postsecondary education and/or employment. The bill we are considering today enhances Perkins by ensuring both secondary and post-secondary students participating in the program are acquiring rigorous academic and technical skills, and will have the opportunity to transition into further education and/or successful employment.

The Perkins Act governs widely supported programs of both the secondary and postsecondary level. For example, nearly all high school students complete at least one vocational education course, and approximately 26 percent of students are considered vocational concentrators, those students who focus on a single occupational area. In my home State of Delaware, we have five career and technical high schools that enroll a total of 5,500 of the 29,500 total high school students. At the postsecondary level, the Perkins Act supports a broad

array of options primarily at the community college level, including Delaware Technical & Community College.

In the 1999-2000 school year, over 50 percent of all students enrolled at the less than 4-year postsecondary level reported that they were majoring in vocational areas.

Today's conference report seeks to build upon reforms made in past reauthorizations, and seeks to enhance this popular program to ensure its success in years to come. The legislation before us today makes significant reforms to academic achievement and accountability to ensure students have the skills necessary to enter the workforce or continue to an institution of higher learning.

As I mentioned, there are five career and technical high schools in Delaware. While all these schools met adequately yearly progress under the No Child Left Behind Act, there is more to be done in academic achievement in these schools and schools across the country. Today, we will improve vocational and technical education by increasing the focus on academics in conjunction with the skill attainment that is incumbent of the program.

One of the unique attributes of vocational and technical education programs is their ability to show students a path that could end in a certificate, credential, employment, military, or postsecondary education. The Tech-Prep program within the Perkins Act is intended to focus on a well-defined link between high school and at least 2 years of postsecondary education. Research has shown, however, that funds are rarely, if ever, used to meet this goal. Rather, funds are often used for purposes within the larger vocational and technical education program. Therefore, the conference agreement revises requirements of the program in order to ensure articulation agreements between secondary and postsecondary institutions are, in fact, being implemented.

Along this same track, we include a new requirement for State development of career and technical programs of study for career and technical program areas. These sequences, of course, will incorporate a nonduplicative progression of both secondary and postsecondary elements which will include both academic and vocational and technical content. Local recipients at both the secondary and postsecondary level would adopt at least one model sequence of courses as developed by the State. I believe this will also help drive program improvements by ensuring that States clarify the progression of academic and vocational technical courses needed for the postsecondary education, training, or employment of a student's choice.

It is clear that we are making some significant and positive changes for the schools and students impacted by this program. One of the biggest changes that I think we are making is for Congress to finally make the switch from

vocational and technical education to career and technical education. In my opinion, this was an important statement for the Congress to make.

While the President has proposed another avenue for high school reform in the Perkins Act, I believe strongly that the reforms we consider today go a long way in driving program improvement and ultimate success for students across the country. The dialogue surrounding high school reform is important and is happening in earnest. I trust that the conference agreement will complement these efforts as a result of the changes in the bill. I believe it will help States, community colleges, and other postsecondary education institutions and local educational agencies to better meet the needs of students participating in career and technical education. I urge my colleagues to support this report so we may send this bill to the President for his signature.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield as much time as he may consume to the gentleman from California, the ranking member of this committee (Mr. GEORGE MILLER).

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman for yielding and also thank her for all of her work on this legislation, along with Chairman BOEHNER and Chairman McKEON and Chairman Castle. And, of course, with the diligent work of our staffs on both sides of the aisle, I think we have crafted a measure that maintains the integrity of the program while responding to the changes in the career and the technical education programs across the country.

While the President has chosen to put forward a proposal to dismantle this critical program, we saw an opportunity to make high school matter for many young people, offer college students pathways into productive employment, and new hope for displaced homemakers and workers reentering the workforce.

The conference report before us signals that we will not retreat on our investment in career education and training. The global economy demands a high skilled workforce, and the Perkins Act, has been instrumental in building today's workforce and the workforce of the future.

Today, these programs are changing in the face of secondary and postsecondary education, and they equip America's workforce with the skills they need to compete in a global economy. More important, career tech programs acknowledge that we must be preparing students and adults for high wage, high skill jobs that exist in this new economy. To do this, however, we need a system that is challenging and academically sound and a system expands the secondary and postsecondary programs, offering students a pathway toward those kinds of careers.

I am pleased that the conference agreement mirrors the recommendations we have heard, that we must pay more attention to math and science and technology to increase our competitiveness. We also know that this is what the high paying jobs require, with these advanced skills.

The conference agreement continues the Tech-Prep program. Tech-Prep has been a model of career and technical education with demonstrated outcomes. In California, students, teachers, and administrators benefit from the connections made between secondary and postsecondary programs, and career and technical programs. Successful Tech-Prep programs offer a challenging and rigorous coursework at the high school level that is coordinated with postsecondary career technical programs. And Tech-Prep students obtain better paying jobs because they have the academic and technical credentials that businesses want for their workforce.

We made important strides in the area of professional development. This conference agreement strengthens the instructional connection between academic and career technical programs. We heard from numerous teachers that successful career tech programs allow academic and vocational teachers to develop curriculums together to teach together so that students can apply the academic content to the real world context.

This conference agreement contains new measures of accountability for career and technical education systems. I do not doubt that some programs may have difficulties in meeting this new system. However, there have been too many programs that have chosen the status quo, to the detriment of our workforce competitiveness. Successful career and technical education programs produce students that outperform their counterparts and make higher wages. We must demand that all programs work toward this same goal. The accountability systems move us in that direction.

I want to point out two other areas where the conference agreement improves upon the House passed bill: Graduation and career plans. Under the agreement, local programs may use Perkins funds to create graduation and career plans for students. These plans can be tools for students and parents to help focus the student on the student's future goals, making sure that the actions that we take will lead to the outcome they desire. And, also, the special populations and nontraditional careers.

The conference agreement also strengthens the provisions, and the gentlewoman from California has been a hawk on these issues for her entire career on this committee, and that is to improve the opportunities for women and men to gain access to nontraditional careers, and ensures that displaced homemakers and individuals with disabilities have access to career and technical education. In this global

economy, we can't afford to waste the potential of any of our people, and these provisions will help ensure that that doesn't happen.

Mr. Chairman, the Perkins Act is a critical workforce development tool, and the bill before us represents a sound career and technical education policy.

I want to thank our staff again for their efforts in bringing this conference agreement together, and I look forward to a quick passage of this conference report. And I also want to comment that this continues a long tradition in this committee where we have been able to work on a bipartisan basis on the most critical education issues confronting this country, both in the development of high performing students and professional individuals and high performing career opportunities for those individuals, and I want to thank all of my colleagues for their efforts on this legislation and urge a passage of this conference report.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Ohio (Mr. REGULA), who is the chairman of the appropriations subcommittee that handles education funding and is probably as interested in education as anyone in this building.

(Mr. REGULA asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. REGULA. Mr. Speaker, I just want to congratulate the Members, my colleagues, and the staff for doing a terrific job. I am very much aware of this topic. We have a technical school in my district (Stark State College) of approximately 8,000 students with a placement rate of about 96 percent, and they are working with the high schools; they are doing what you are envisioning in this conference report.

To me, this is one of the most important pieces of legislation that will come out of this session, because education is the future and this legislation gives an opportunity and expands the horizons of many students that otherwise would not get that chance. I do have to say that one of the most grievous things to me is the dropout rate in this country. An average of thirty-two percent of our students nationwide do not finish high school. Part of it is because they are bored, part of it is because they don't learn to read, part of it is a whole lot of different things. They are attracted to get out early and get some kind of a job and buy a car or whatever.

This legislation will help to reduce the dropout rate. If the schools across this country will work out the programs that are envisioned in this report, I think our schools will make giant strides in reducing dropouts, because it will allow students at the high school to get a vision of what can be achieved, what they can do in technical education and what they can do in employment opportunities and what a better future they can have. This should be billed as a hope bill, it is a future bill.

Again, I congratulate my colleagues and the staff for constructing a terrific piece of legislation, certainly it will mean a lot to the future of this Nation. If you read Tom Friedman's book "The World is Flat," you realize how important it is as a Nation that we give educational opportunity to everybody that we utilize the resources of all our people.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. SOUDER), another member of the committee who is always fighting for children in a whole variety of ways, be it dealing with drugs and those things, or education itself.

(Mr. SOUDER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

□ 1300

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman MCKEON for his leadership and Mr. MILLER for his leadership in working in a bipartisan effort with this.

But I want to say, first off, that it affirms what career and technical educational programs in my district are already doing. They are ensuring that all current technical education programs include rigorous and challenging academic courses; offer career and technical programs of study known as career majors; offer dual enrollment in secondary and postsecondary courses; and permit private and home school students to participate in career and technical education programs. Additionally, I am pleased that the bill allows for increased funding flexibility at the State level, as well as the promotion of State incentive grants to programs with exemplary performance.

It is a little unusual in the sense I represent a district that still makes things. In my congressional district, we have the highest percent manufacturing left in America as far as what people do. Other people can go on vacation in other places. They can get a service job in other places, run credit card companies in other places; but we still make things.

Vocational education, if it is going to compete, I remember years ago, because I am old now, in the 1960s, my father at our small retail store always took students who they were afraid were going to drop out and started trying to teach them different crafts and trades and get them into the workforce.

I know that when I was a student reporter in college and did some stories on local high schools even out in the ag communities, Woodland High School had a big area where they had a combine and other things so kids could get experience working in farming.

But we are at a whole other technical level. Even at my rural high schools in Angola, Indiana, a small high school, they have worked with TriState College to hook up an ethernet-type of

Internet connection so they can take courses after school, to get courses after school to work with the plastics industry, the largest employer in my district, so kids can go out and learn technical skills.

If they are going to compete with China, if they are going to compete with India, if they are going to compete worldwide, they are not going to have the old things where my grandpa did it this way and my great-grandpa did it this way, and I am going to have pensions and health care forever. It is going to be a lot more competitive. It is going to take constant cross-training for advanced skills, for basic entry skills, and basic entry things in these manufacturing companies in my district.

If they cannot figure out how to work a computer, if they cannot figure out how to multitask, if they cannot figure out how to be flexible when a contract changes just like that, that company is gone. It is not anymore just to Mexico. It is to China.

So vocational education plays such a critical role at the college level, just like continuing education does, and this bill gives us more flexibility to work in this program, to adjust to the new technologies we are seeing, the online, the constant education, the interrelationship between industry and our universities and high schools.

The one thing I would strongly urge, and I continue to urge, the NFIB; the NAM, the National Association of Manufacturing; the U.S. Chamber, that the retailers engage in their local schools. They always come to me and everybody comes and says we are worried about our workforce, we are worried that we cannot get the quality. Well, engage the schools, hire these kids, train these kids, take advantage of these programs, because that is the only way we are going to keep jobs in America.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of S. 250, the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006. I'd also like to thank the Chairman of the Education and the Workforce Committee, Mr. MCKEON, for his hard work on this legislation. S. 250 will help strengthen and improve career and technical education programs across the country by helping states better utilize federal funding, increasing accountability, emphasizing student academic and technical achievement, and improving coordination between secondary and postsecondary career and technical education.

In today's world, career and technical education is an important component of most any student's education as it helps prepare high school students for either a transition to the workforce or a postsecondary degree. The programs help students begin thinking about different careers of interest, provide opportunities for exploring those career options, and start students down a path toward accomplishing their career goals. Moreover, the program helps students see a connection between the academic subjects in the classroom and the application of that knowledge in the

working world. For many students, this connection is critical to their decision to stay in high school and graduate with a diploma.

I am pleased today to support the conference report on S. 250 and urge my colleagues to vote in favor of its passage. While I would have liked to have seen additional reforms—particularly in the areas of private school and home school participation—this bill represents significant bipartisan agreement in how to strengthen the Perkins program.

It affirms in many ways what career and technical education programs in my district are already doing: ensuring that all career and technical education programs include rigorous and challenging academic courses; offering career and technical programs of study—known as career majors; offering dual enrollment in secondary and postsecondary courses; and permitting private and home school students to participate in career and technical education programs. Additionally, I am pleased that the bill allows for increased funding flexibility at the state level as well as the promotion of state incentive grants to programs with exemplary performance.

Career and technical education is an important part of America's K–12 education system, and I would urge my colleagues to vote in favor of S. 250 today. This legislation will help improve both our education system and our nation's ever-changing economy as students are more prepared to enter either the workforce or some form of post-secondary education following their graduation from a local career and technical education program.

My congressional district has the highest percent manufacturing in America. But even manufacturing is changing. In order to compete with China, India and other worldwide nations the same old approach will not work. We need flexible and creative education programs to complete the needs.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman. I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE), another individual who has probably done as much for young people as anybody in this country and in his lifetime in a variety of capacities.

Mr. OSBORNE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Subcommittee Chairman CASTLE and Mr. MILLER and Ms. WOOLSEY and Chairman MCKEON for their work on this bill and rise in support of it.

I am especially pleased that Congress has shown such strong support for the Perkins program in view of the fact that it has been zeroed out on successive years by the administration, and it seems that people in this body understand the importance of a vocational technical education, particularly important in my State of Nebraska which is largely rural. In rural America, if you do not have vocational technical education you have real problems. So this has been critical.

Also, we currently lack the skilled workforce in our country to maintain our economy; and a big key to this, of course, is vocational training.

This bill improves vocational technical education in several key areas. As has been mentioned, it requires greater academic rigor, especially in math and science. I think a few years

ago I read someplace where the United States ranked 19th out of 21 nations in advanced math and science. This is an area we cannot afford to continue to fall behind in. So this academic rigor will certainly help.

As has been mentioned, it requires greater coordination between high school and postsecondary courses in vocational and technical education. So often in high school someone will take a vocational course and then go to community college; it would be the same course or there would be no coordination between the two. This allows for a smooth transition from high school into community colleges and 4-year colleges in the vocational technical area which we think is important.

Greater accountability is critical, and a new use we were able to put in this bill which is something I was really in favor of was an allowable use as entrepreneurial education as part of the Perkins grants.

So in the areas that I focus on right now in rural America, we are losing our young people at a rapid rate. If you teach them entrepreneurial skills, how to write a grant, how to write a business plan, how to market, particularly how to market using the Internet, and you give them those skills, sometimes they can find a way to stay in a small town and make a living. So we think that entrepreneurial skills are going to be critical as a part of this program.

As has already been mentioned, the flexibility is critical at the State and local levels because what constitutes vocational education in one State or one region may not be similar to what another region needs, and that flexibility is critical.

So, again, I just want to express strong support. I think it is a very good bill, very good conference report and want to thank Mr. CASTLE and all those involved again, and the staff particularly.

Ms. WOOLSEY. In closing, Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind everybody that more than 11,000 high schools and regional technical centers and 2,600 postsecondary schools provide career and technical programs to high school students and adults who are returning to the workforce or wishing to learn new skills. That supports our goal that all students should have access to career and technical programs that give them a strong academic foundation and technical proficiency. This provides opportunity for jobs that pay a livable wage. It prevents dropouts, and it gives a path into college-level education should an individual choose.

This legislation today renews our commitment to prepare our workforce for the global economy. It solidly rejects the President's proposal to eliminate the program.

So, finally, it was wonderful to hear Mr. REGULA, his words in support of vocational education, because he is the ranking member of the subcommittee on appropriations that we go to to fund

these programs, because we know that none of this works, none of it works, Mr. Speaker, unless we provide the needed funding.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the remainder of my time.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume in closing.

Mr. Speaker, the conference report before us is a good one and one worthy of very strong support here. Passage of it will demonstrate our commitment to the millions of students who count on the career and technical education programs we are aiming to strengthen.

Career and technical education is a fundamental part of our efforts to improve academic achievement at all levels so our Nation remains competitive in the 21st century global economy. And this conference report sharpens the Perkins program's focus on both rigorous academics and technical achievement. It protects and enhances local control at a State and community level. And it seeks more opportunities for coordination between secondary and postsecondary career and technical education.

This conference report would not be possible if not for some key staff members at the Education and the Workforce Committee: Whitney Rhoades, Stephanie Milburn, Lucy House, Rich Stombres, and Susan Ross on the committee staff, and Denise Forte and Lloyd Horwich from the minority staff have worked tirelessly to get to this point where we are today. I would like to thank Sara Rittling of my staff who has worked on this as well.

For those not familiar with the process around here, without that staff, I am sure Ms. WOOLSEY and I would probably agree, we would probably never get a bill like this written. Their work is exemplary in this particular case. And I would just like to thank them for their determination and expertise.

Again, I thank my colleagues on the committee on both sides of the aisle for their efforts on this conference report, and I do urge its final passage.

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Reauthorization of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act. As a member of the Education and the Workforce Committee and having served on the Conference Committee, I am pleased we have reached an agreement to ensure the continuation of this important program.

Research shows that secondary students who participate in career and technical education achieve better employment and earnings outcomes than other students. Further, these students are more likely to pursue postsecondary education, have a higher grade point average in college, and are less likely to drop out in the first year of college.

Recognizing the positive contributions of career and technical education, I support swift passage of this bill. This legislation is the product of considerable and effective bipartisan negotiations.

While I intend to continue working with my colleagues on the Senate side to improve the particular funding levels for Wisconsin through

the appropriations process, I am satisfied with the overall bill. A lot of time and work by committee members and staff have been put into drafting the best bill possible that everyone can support.

Specifically, I am glad that S. 250 retains a separate authorization for the Tech Prep program. The House-passed bill eliminated this separate funding and during committee consideration of the bill, Representative TIERNEY and I offered an amendment to restore Tech Prep as a separate authorization.

Tech Prep creates seamless pathways for secondary students to transition into post-secondary education programs in the high-skill, high-wage technical fields. These academically and technically prepared graduates are critical to the economic growth, productivity and internal competitiveness of the United States. Knowing how critical this funding is to our local communities, I am pleased funding for the Tech Prep program has been kept separate from the Perkins block grant.

In addition to protecting Tech Prep, the conference report increases the role of math, science and technology in career and technical education programs and encourages the expanded use of technology by teachers and faculty. Increasing the emphasis given to science, technology, and mathematics is critical for the United States to retain its global competitiveness. We cannot afford to ignore growing competition from other countries by directing our resources away from these fields of study.

Again, I would like to thank all those in the education community who participated in reauthorization for their input and work on this bill. I am particularly pleased to acknowledge Dr. Bill Ihlenfeldt, President of the Chippewa Valley Technical College in Eau Claire, WI, who testified before the Education and the Workforce Committee in May of 2004. His thoughts and perspective on reauthorization of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act were invaluable in addressing the needs of our country. His insight was especially helpful in considering issues of importance for the 53,000 students attending technical schools in my district—Western Technical College, Chippewa Valley Technical College, and Southwest Tech—as well as the countless career and technical secondary students in the Third Congressional District of western Wisconsin. I urge my colleagues to vote yes.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the conference report.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the conference report.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material on H.R. 4157.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CASTLE). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

#### HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PROMOTION ACT OF 2006

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 952 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 4157.

□ 1311

#### IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 4157) to amend the Social Security Act to encourage the dissemination, security, confidentiality, and usefulness of health information technology, with Mr. SIMPSON in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

General debate shall not exceed 1 hour, with 35 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and 25 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

The gentleman from Texas (Mr. BARTON) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) each will control 17½ minutes, and the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Mrs. JOHNSON) and the gentleman from California (Mr. STARK) each will control 12½ minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I am pleased that the House today is going to consider H.R. 4157, the Health Information Technology Promotion Act of 2006. This legislation should help move our health care system into the modern era and the modern information age.

We all remember a time when e-mail was a dream and getting the legislative text from the House of Representatives Web site was impossible because it simply did not exist. As information systems have moved into the digital age, Congress and most of the private sector have embraced it. We have found that we could get information much more efficiently and quickly at much less cost.

The health care system, for whatever reason, has not done that. For all of its

medical genius and astonishing technology in terms of surgery and orthopedics and diagnosis, American health care is still stuck back in the 19th century, with a paper record system that is inefficient, wasteful, error-prone and occasionally dangerous. The legislation before us today should change that.

With H.R. 4157, records that have been stuffed in a file cabinet and illegible prescriptions that nobody can read scrawled on pieces of paper will finally give way to digital medical records, electronic prescribing, and efficient coordination of care. Sick patients will get better and everybody should save money.

The bill before us sets out a framework for endorsing core interoperability guidelines and mandates compliance for a Federal information system within 3 years of endorsement of such guidelines. Of vital importance are provisions contained in the legislation that create safe harbors to the Stark and Anti-kickback laws for the provision of health information technology and services to better coordinate care between hospitals and providers. These changes are long overdue.

Hospitals and other health care entities that have invested in systems that are tested and work well should be able to share their experience and purchasing power with physicians. Current laws have prevented these reasonable steps to better coordinate patient care by not allowing the sharing of health information technology systems.

Also, I would like to express support for the Secretary of Health and Human Services to look at the list of entities that we make eligible for this safe harbor and to expand upon it, specifically, to include independent clinical laboratories which carry a great deal of health data that should be shared electronically.

□ 1315

These safe harbors will allow for economical sharing of health information technology to better coordinate care, reduce medical error, and improve patient outcomes.

Medical science in recent years has produced tremendous discoveries that have revolutionized how we treat disease and care for patients. Unfortunately, the medical record information technologies needed to take advantage of these discoveries remain locked in an era of paper and filing cabinets. We can do better, and the legislation before us today will do better.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 3 minutes.

Our Nation's health care system is arguably the most inefficient and costly system in the industrialized world. We spend approximately \$1.7 billion annually on health care, and yet many of our citizens are in poorer health than the citizens of countries that spend far less. That is because our Nation's health care system is wrought with